

# HOUSE . . . . . No. 4479

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By Mrs. Haddad of Somerset, petition of Patricia A. Haddad and others for legislation to establish a training program for the teaching of self-control by athletes participating on school and organized sports teams. Education.

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## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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### PETITION OF:

Patricia A. Haddad	Kay Khan
Geraldine Creedon	Douglas W. Petersen
William Smitty Pignatelli	Cleon H. Turner
Robert L. Rice, Jr.	Stephen P. LeDuc
Cory Atkins	Thomas M. Stanley
Ruth B. Balser	Alice K. Wolf
Peter J. Koutoujian	Pam Richardson
Robert S. Hargraves	

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In the Year Two Thousand and Eight.

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### AN ACT RELATIVE TO TEACHING SELF CONTROL ON SPORTS TEAMS.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:*

- 1        1.) The Department of Mental Health in conjunction with the
- 2        Department of Education shall establish a pilot program, subject to
- 3        appropriation, for the purpose of creating and evaluating a science
- 4        based curriculum and training program for school and organized
- 5        youth sports teams. The goal of the pilot program is to have children
- 6        practice the mental skills associated with self-control in an effort to
- 7        reduce violence, drug and alcohol abuse, eating disorders, bullying
- 8        and other destructive choices commonly made by youth.
- 9        2.) There shall be an advisory committee established to assist in
- 10      the creation and implementation of the pilot program. This advisory
- 11      committee shall consist of 9 members. One member shall be an
- 12      expert in the field of sports psychology, one member shall have
- 13      experience in coaching and administering youth sports, one member
- 14      shall be from the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletics Associa-
- 15      tion (MIAA), one member shall be from a recreational organized

16 youth sports league, one member shall be a licensed practitioner in  
17 cognitive-behavioral psychology, one member shall be a health psy-  
18 chologist, one member shall be a physical educator, one member  
19 shall be a health educator, and one member who shall be a licensed  
20 child psychologist. At least one member of the advisory committee  
21 shall have experience in conducting and reviewing science based  
22 psychological research.

23       3.) The advisory committee shall conduct a review of existing  
24 resources including, but not limited to, texts, programs, science  
25 based research, and curricula related to the goals of the pilot pro-  
26 gram. The advisory committee shall make specific recommendations  
27 on the elements that shall be included in a model curriculum and  
28 training program for interscholastic and youth athletics, and shall  
29 have final approval of the subsequently developed curriculum and  
30 training program.

31       4.) The Department of Mental Health in cooperation with the  
32 Department of Education shall develop a curriculum and training  
33 program, subject to appropriation, for interscholastic and youth ath-  
34 letics which shall include, but not be limited to:—

35       (a) A science-based, practical guide for athletic directors, youth  
36 sports administrators and their coaches that offers the mental skills  
37 and techniques found in sport and cognitive behavioral psychology  
38 that integrates the teaching of self-control and sportsmanship within  
39 the existing framework of coaching sports teams and conducting  
40 physical education classes, including methods for recognizing  
41 thought, categorizing and disputing perceptions and changing  
42 thought to alter feelings, behavior and performance;

43       (b) A straightforward, science-based text for middle and high  
44 school aged students that teaches and gives mental drills that has  
45 children practicing the mental skills involved in physical activity,  
46 such as, but not limited to, focus, changing thought, effort, creating a  
47 positive environment for self and others, goal-setting, visualization,  
48 resiliency and task-orientation;

49       (c) Programming to deliver workshops, lectures and informative  
50 meetings to engage students, parents, teachers and coaches in discus-  
51 sions about self-control and sportsmanship and its relevance to  
52 behavior on and off the playing field.

53       4. The Department of Mental Health in cooperation with the  
54 Department of Education shall conduct a short term and longitudinal

55 study to assess the effectiveness of the approved pilot curriculum  
56 and program in achieving aims of program, including, but not lim-  
57 ited to:—

58       1) participants showing evidence that they have learned basic  
59 skills such as the ability to change thought as compared to control  
60 groups;

61       (2) effectiveness in changing behavior in game and practice situa-  
62 tions, as well as behavior in and out of school;

63       (3) clearly stated rationale underlying the program and the pro-  
64 gram's content and processes are aligned with its goals;

65       (4) the program's content takes into consideration the characteris-  
66 tics of the intended age, population and setting;

67       (5) the program implementation process effectively engages  
68 teachers, coaches administrators and athletes;

69       (6) the successful integration of the content into coaching. The  
70 Department will submit a report to the Joint Committee on Mental  
71 Health and the Joint Committee on Education within three years of  
72 the beginning of the pilot program.

73       5.) The developed curriculum and related materials will be made  
74 available for voluntary use to all public schools and youth sports  
75 leagues within the Commonwealth.

76       6.) The Department of Mental Health in cooperation with the  
77 Department of Education shall create a public information cam-  
78 paign, subject to appropriation, that will relay the specific mental  
79 skills required to maintain self-control and encourage their use in all  
80 aspects of life including, but not limited to sports teams, schools, the  
81 arts and all places where children congregate.